

# 50

MOST FREQUENT  
ASKED

## *Bible Questions*

*Was Crucifixion on Friday?*

*Cain's Wife?*

*Salvation of Heathen?*

*Unpardonable Sin?*

*Know Our Loved Ones in  
Heaven?*

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# 50 Most Frequently Asked Bible Questions

by

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## THE BIBLE HAS THE ANSWER

- How wonderful to hold in our hands the Book from God.

There are many books in the world, some good, some bad which contain varying degrees of human wisdom. The Bible, however, is a magnificent fountainhead of all wisdom because an omniscient God is its author and because God's purpose is to answer every question in human life.

- Over and over again on its sacred pages the Word of God claims unique divine inspiration. Woven into the very warp and woof of its structure is the insistence that here we have not the mere words of fallible humanity but rather the infallible, inerrant, indestructible, all-prevailing words of Deity.

- Men have struggled over problems of interpretations and on some questions there is wide divergence of opinion, but in the main, the Scriptures stand superb and majestic in their ability to render irrevocable decisions on every question in human life.

- To such a book the approach should be one of sincere humility.

Hearts should be quite prepared to accept the Scripture's dictum as the final voice of authority. Moreover, the teaching is right on the surface. God did not plan for His book to be one of esoteric mystery. Rather, it is consistently a Book of truth for minds simple and profound; genuine peace enters the heart as one accepts the Scriptures at face value.

- The answers to the questions contained herein are valuable only as the Scriptures themselves back them up. The reader is earnestly invited to place the Bible at his elbow and look up the passages referred to as he goes along.

## WILL WE KNOW OUR LOVED ONES IN HEAVEN?

- Just why and how this question gained such prominence is a mystery. Surely, all the teaching of the New Testament about heaven is heavily on the side of the complete and universal recognition of all our loved ones in the gloryland. Why it is thought that we should know less in paradise than we know on earth is difficult to figure out.
- Speaking of that time the Apostle Paul writes (I Cor. 13:12) "now we see through a glass darkly (dimly, as in a mirror, enigmatically); but then face to face." The knowledge we have here on earth is somewhat like being in a mystery house of mirrors. We're never too sure of anything. Heaven, however, will be a clear, face to face proposition. The mystery, the dimness will be removed.
- Our mental capacities too will be greatly enlarged. In the same passage we are told that "then we shall know as we are known." The thought is, that our powers of recognition of one another and of God will be comparable to God's recognition of us. Our bodies too, and this of course includes our minds, eyes, ears, perceptions, are said (I Cor. 15:35-50) to undergo a tremendous metamorphosis in the resurrection. As the mere single grain is compared to the grown plant including root, stalk, leaves, fruit, flower, etc., so is the comparison of our old body to our new body.
- But the greatest comparison is our coming likeness to the new and wonderful resurrection body of our Lord. His true picture is seen in Revelation 1:12-18. But the demonstrations given after His resurrection afford much to thrill about (John 20:19-29; 21:1-13; Acts 1-10). It is glorious to contemplate that our new bodies and minds shall be like Christ's (Phil. 3:20, 21; I John 3:2).
- Not only shall we be able to recognize everyone whom we have known here on earth, but we shall instantly and completely recognize even without introduction all the great men and women of God who have lived in other ages. It will be nothing at all to know Abraham, the man of faith. We shall instantly recognize King David, and Elijah, and Jonah, and Paul, and John and the disciples. But even that will not be all. Since the ascension of Christ, many other men of God have lived . . . Luther, Wesley, Wycliffe, Moody . . . these too we shall know.
- Nor shall we recognize friends by their limitations, for then all shall be in the peak of health and strength.

## **DID THE WITCH OF ENDOR CALL UP SAMUEL?**

- The incident occurred in the life of King Saul (I Sam. 28). Saul was Israel's first King and though he started out well, he fell into sin, broke God's commandments, and failed miserably. At the very end of his life, instead of seeking the Lord, he sought to know the outcome of a battle through a witch, a fortune teller.

- The big question is whether the Witch of Endor had power to call back to earth someone who had previously died. We do not think she did, nor does any spiritist or medium. The destiny and location of the dead are locked, and only One has the key (Rev. 1:18). That the Witch did not expect to actually see Samuel is apparent, for she seems frightened beyond measure.

- For His own reasons, God allowed this incident to take place.

And we believe the account teaches that Saul both saw and talked with Samuel. This is the only occasion ever recorded. But this does not give authority for any child of God today to meddle at all in the things of darkness. Rather, we are forbidden to have anything whatsoever to do with spiritists, fortune tellers, astrologers, etc. (Deut. 18:14-19; Lev. 19:31; II Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:11). While no doubt most of the spiritism today is fakery, the Christian is reminded that Satan has under his control a vast system of demonic spirits and powers of darkness.

## **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "FALL FROM GRACE"?**

- Paul was the great Apostle to the Gentiles. In some cities following Paul's visit there came Judaizing teachers saying that while it was all right to trust Christ, they must also keep the law. God's great answer to this heresy was the letter to the Galatians. Here, the Spirit of God shows that to mix these two diverse systems was to rob the law of its terror and grace of its freeness. It just won't work.

- In fact, for a Christian to endeavor to please God by keeping the law was a "fall from grace." To thus fall, however, was to fall back into law, not into sin. The truth is that Christ is wonderfully sufficient to both save and to keep, and the principles of grace are a full and complete system for the age in which we live.

- Technically speaking, it is impossible for a genuine Christian to fall from grace. For this one has been born again into the family of God and can never be unborn. Most people, however, think that falling from grace is to fall into sin. One of the best treatises on this subject is Dr. C. I. Scofield's little booklet "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth" which is worth its weight in gold.

## **WILL PEOPLE BE SAVED DURING THE TRIBULATION?**

- The great Tribulation as set forth in Scripture is a time of frightful judgment (Matt. 24:21, 22). It is ushered in by the rapture of the Church (I Thess. 4:13-18) and closes with the return of Christ in power and great glory (Rev. 19:11-16). It is thought to be a period of seven years and its chief characteristic will be the pouring out of God's wrath in judgment upon an utterly disobedient and rebellious world.
- The rapture will mean the translation of all true Christians into the immediate presence of Christ (I Cor. 15:51-53). But God has never left the world without a witness to Himself. Apparently at this time, God will call and seal unto Himself a special group of Jewish evangelists who are known in Scripture as the 144,000 (Rev. 7:4-8). The mission of this group will be to go into the length and breadth of the world and preach the gospel of the Kingdom (Matt. 24:14). This message will call attention to the soon coming of the King of all the earth.
- It seems that these 144,000 will be variously treated. Some will receive their message while others will shamefully treat them, and as a result, many of them will die (Rev. 6:9-11). Others will suffer hunger, many will be cast into prison, others will be sick. It is presumed that the judgment of the Gentile nations at the end of the tribulation period will be on the basis of how they have treated these tribulation evangelists (Matt. 25:31-46).
- The result of this preaching during the Tribulation will be the salvation of many who have turned to God (Rev. 7:9-17). Note however, that these are not church saints, nor are they ever called children of God. They are a separate group of saints who are said to "have come out of great tribulation" and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of Christ. And while there are blessings for them, they can never share in the glories that will attend the Bride of Christ. Many of them will pay for their belief with their life's blood (Rev. 6:9-11).
- However, it is folly of the most tragic sort to put off accepting Christ today in the belief that one may receive Him in the tribulation period. Salvation at that time will be exceedingly difficult and there is little assurance that it will be offered to everyone. Today is the accepted time of salvation (II Cor. 6:2).



## ON WHAT DAY WAS OUR LORD CRUCIFIED?

- Perhaps the idea that Christ was crucified on Friday arose from the statement that the crucifixion occurred on the day before the sabbath (John 19:31). But it should be remembered that there were many sabbaths in the Jewish year besides the fifty-two weekly sabbaths (Lev. 23:7, 8). And the sabbaths (specially holy days) by which the passover feast and the feast of the unleavened bread were begun were particularly holy days. The passover always fell on the 14th day of Abib (Lev. 23:5) and of course this would fall on a different day of each succeeding year.

- It seems quite clear that Christ was not crucified on Friday for this would not in any way allow the necessary time for Him to be in the tomb. Some Bible students feel that the crucifixion occurred on Thursday morning and afternoon. If this were true, then Christ would lie in the tomb three nights, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. And because it is quite true that in Jewish reckoning a portion of a day is often referred to as a complete day, He would be in the grave a portion (even though a small portion) of Thursday, all of Friday, and all of Saturday, thus rising from the dead on early Sunday morning. If we are content to call the portion of Thursday a day this seems to be the logical explanation.

- Other students point out that the Jewish day began at 6 P.M., so if the body of our Lord were placed in the tomb before 6 P.M. on Thursday which was the beginning of the Jewish Friday, He would have remained through Thursday (night and day), Friday (night and day) and Saturday (night and day) and could have been raised from the dead just as Sunday was beginning (6 P.M. Saturday; compare Matt. 28:1). In this way the entombment would fulfill our Lord's prediction of Matthew 12:40.

- But even these explanations do not fully answer all the problems. The disciples on the road to Emmaeus who saw our Lord on the day of the resurrection remarked "today is the third day since these things were done" (Luke 24:21).

- Perhaps it is best not to be too much concerned over what day our Lord rose from the dead. The important thing is that He did rise, and that He ever lives (Rev. 1:18). And of course His resurrection is guarantee and proof positive that we too shall live (I Cor. 15:13-23). Some day we shall fully know and understand.

## **IS "HELLFIRE" ACTUAL FLAME OR FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE?**

- In Luke 16 our Lord told an actual account of the death and destiny of two men, Lazarus and one traditionally called Dives. Lazarus went to Abraham's bosom and the rich man went to hades, a place of torment. In our Lord's own account of the scene that followed the rich man was tormented in a flame and his urgent request was that Lazarus should dip the tip of his finger in water and cool his tongue. While the rich man was not consumed in the fire, the torment and anguish were real enough. There is no indication that figurate language is meant here.
- On three occasions our Lord speaks with the utmost solemnity concerning the terrors of hellfire (Matt. 18:8-10; Luke 12:5; Matt. 25:15). The Book of Revelation speaks with frightful vividness of the lake of fire and brimstone where all those whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life must go (Rev. 20:10-15). It seems impossible to read these passages and not be tremendously impressed with the reality of this fiery torment.
- If, on the other hand, the words used for hellfire are merely figurative, then the reality of this figure must be frightful indeed. Torment by fire is excruciating, and if fire is God's figure, then the horrors of hell must be unbelievably awful.
- What will make hell more terrible is the remembrance that no one in all of life need ever to have gone there, for hell was never created for men, but was created for the Devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41).

## **WHY DID GOD CREATE THE DEVIL?**

- In a strict sense, God did create the Devil. God created a beautiful shining creature known as Lucifer, the Son of the Morning, a guardian of the throne (Isa. 14:12; Ezek. 28:14). While this subject is somewhat shrouded in mystery, it seems clear that Lucifer, his heart being filled with pride, desired to be the Most High, and sought to dethrone God (Isa. 14:12-15). For this first awful sin, he was judged and he became the fiendish creature we know today as Satan, the old Serpent, the Dragon, and the Accuser of the brethren.
- It is also true that God foreknew all this and for His own purposes allowed it to come to pass. An inkling of God's reasoning might be found in the fact that there is no possibility to choose the right unless there is the corresponding possibility to choose the wrong. Some day this great mystery will all be clear to us.



## **WHY DO WE HAVE TWO GENEALOGIES OF CHRIST?**

- The answer seems to be that Matthew gives us the ancestry of Joseph the foster-father of Christ, and Luke's table gives us the royal ancestry of Mary, the mother of Christ through Heli, the father-in-law of Joseph. Some have pointed out that Matthew's table presents the legal rights to the throne and Luke's table the royal rights. So in the marriage of Mary and Joseph these two rights were joined thus insuring the absolute unquestioned authority of Christ to the Kingship.

- On the other hand, it is to be remembered that the genealogy in Matthew included the line through Jeconiah (Coniah) which was a line cursed by God who promised that no one from this line should sit on the throne (Jer. 22:24-30).

- Therefore some have felt that the reason for Matthew's genealogy was to further prove the virgin birth showing that Christ was not the son of Joseph, and therefore did not partake of the curse upon the kingly line through Coniah. In the marriage of Mary and Joseph both rights to the throne are united without the prohibition of the curse.

## **CAN A CHRISTIAN GO TO WAR?**

- In this life the Christian has two distinct responsibilities. First he ought to live righteously and soberly in this present world exhibiting daily the love of Christ. Christians are told to expect persecution and we are to bless them that curse us and pray for them that spitefully use us. We are to remember that we are strangers and pilgrims here below and that we look for an heavenly city. In all matters of conduct we are to live peaceably with all men and to avenge not ourselves.

- On the other hand the Christian has a very definite responsibility to his government. The Scriptures categorically teach that the powers of government are ordained of God, and therefore the child of God should obey them as such (Rom. 13:1-7). In all matters of life and conduct the Christian should be an exemplary citizen.

- In matters of war the Christian acting under regularly constituted authority is not to regard the taking up of arms as murder any more than the duties of policemen.

- On a number of occasions as our Lord, Peter and Paul dealt with soldiers there was no command for them to leave their posts, but rather to serve God faithfully as soldiers of their countries (Matt. 8:5-13; Acts 10:1-48; Acts 27:43).

## **MUST THE GOSPEL BE PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD BEFORE OUR LORD COMES?**

- In Matthew 24:14 we have this statement: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."
- It should be understood that the "gospel of the kingdom" is different from the "gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24). Today we preach the gospel of grace . . . "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Our commission is to go into all the world with this good news. The gospel of the kingdom concerns the coming of the King and is epitomized in the phrase "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The preaching of this gospel awaits the rapture of the church (I Thess. 4:13-18) and the beginning of the great Tribulation period (Matt. 24:21).
- Evidently the kingdom message will be proclaimed by the 144,000 sealed servants of God (Rev. 7:4-8) who are especially empowered by God for this purpose. The results of their preaching are the multitudes of saved who appear in heaven (Rev. 7:9-17).
- The meaning of this verse (Matt. 24:14) has to do with the world-wide proclamation of the message of the coming of Christ at the end of the Tribulation, and just before the beginning of the Millennium. There is nothing in this verse which teaches that all nations must be converted, or even evangelized before the translation of the Church saints.

## **DO THE SCRIPTURES SPEAK OF THE DOOM OF RUSSIA?**

- We believe so. In Ezekiel 38, 39 there is a story of a tremendous military expedition upon the land of Israel by a vast coalition of nations located to the north (Ezek. 38:15; 39:2). The time is evidently after the events of Ezekiel 37 which graphically portray the restoration of the nation of Israel to their own land in the latter times.
- Apparently what happens is that Russia casts envious eyes upon the fabulous wealth of this new nation which is unarmed, and suddenly decides to ruthlessly seize it. Although the nations of the world feebly protest, the raid takes place and the monstrous Russian force violently descends upon the defenseless mountains of Israel.
- There God Himself comes to the aid of His ancient people and with unprecedented heavenly artillery, He destroys five-sixths of the invading force with rain, hail, lightning and earthquake. Most Bible students feel this event will come in the first 3½ years of the Tribulation.

## **WHERE DID CAIN GET HIS WIFE?**

- This is an old, old question which has arisen due to the fact that the Bible's purpose is not to offer a complete history of any individual life or nation, but rather to tell the story of redemption. Cain was the first son of Adam and Eve and without a doubt married either one of his sisters or someone further removed in his own family, as a niece.
- The account states (Gen. 5:3) that Adam had other sons and daughters besides Abel and Seth. It was no doubt, to one of these that Cain was eventually married. In Sidney Collett's interesting book "All About the Bible" it is shown that Cain, if he lived to approximately the same age as his father, and if he married near the middle of his lifetime, could have had the choice of over 100,000 girls.
- The same problem, of course, was that of Seth, Adam and Eve's third son and also their other children, sons and daughters. Let it be remembered, however, that at this time the race was pure and there would not have been the same danger that results from intermarriage today. Also, that God not only did not forbid such a practice but planned the perpetuation of the human race on this basis.

## **DO ANIMALS HAVE SOULS AND WILL THERE BE ANIMALS IN HEAVEN?**

- Yes, animals have souls for the soul is the immaterial part of the animal. These creatures of God are twofold having a complete body ready to operate, including muscles, nerves, blood, brain, etc. Then God provides the spark of life for the animal which we call the soul. When the animal's soul leaves the body at death, we do not know just where it goes, for the Scriptures do not state.
- On the other hand, man is a threefold being having a body, soul and spirit. The spirit is that God consciousness which makes man able to know, understand and worship his Creator. At man's death the soul and spirit return to the place which God has provided, the saved "with Christ; which is far better" and the unsaved to everlasting separation.
- Concerning whether or not animals which we have known here will be in heaven, there is no scriptural information. The Book of Revelation speaks of horses (Rev. 19:11-14) but these may be special heavenly horses.

## IS PETER THE ROCK OF THE CHURCH?

- In Matthew 16:18 our Lord in speaking to His disciples said, "Thou art Peter (Greek: petros) and upon this rock (Greek: petra) I will build my church." A dangerous misapprehension has resulted from a mere similarity of terms here. If our Lord had meant to build the church upon this disciple He would have clearly said, "... and upon thee I will build my church." It should be clearly understood that petros is a separate and distinct word from petra as pebble is distinct from crag and there is absolutely no basis in this passage to teach the primacy of the Apostle Peter in the Church of Jesus Christ.
- All scripture is to be interpreted by comparison with other scripture and our Lord's unquestioned meaning in this passage is that the future church was to be built upon Himself as the Christ and the Son of the living God. This all transcendent truth, Peter had just enunciated (Matt. 16:16).
- The foundation of the church is accurately and clearly stated in I Corinthians 3:11, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ." Note also Peter's own testimony in Acts 4:11,12, and the clear cut testimony to the absolute pre-eminence of Christ in Peter's own writings (I Pet. 2:4-8; 2:21-25; II Pet. 2:16-18). It is heresy of the worst sort to believe that the foundation of Christ's church could rest upon the fallibility of any mere man. The church is a divinely appointed organism with a divine foundation, even Christ Himself.
- Let it be further remembered that Peter did not for one minute either believe or teach that he had been given a superior position. Even in the original church at Jerusalem it was James not Peter who had the leadership (Acts 15:13, 19). And in his first letter, far from expounding on his own primacy, he humbly and sincerely styles himself as an Elder writing to Elders (I Pet. 5:1).
- We do not mean in any way to take away from the rightful honor that is Peter's. Our Lord Himself called Peter "blessed" and it was given to Peter to open some early doors to the gospel. Concerning Peter's so called "successors" he had none. There is not the slightest ground for the doctrine of apostolic succession. Nor has Christ any vice-regent on earth for He needs none, being Himself present with the Church (Matt. 18:20).

## SHOULD A CHRISTIAN TITHE?

- The tithe, or the giving of ten per cent of a person's income was an integral part of the Mosaic law and was obligatory upon the Israelites (Lev. 27:30-34). Under the law the Israelite was to give to God first of all, and if he withheld his tithe, he was said to be robbing God (Mal. 3:8-10). The tithe was the Lord's.
- Under the New Testament principles of grace the Christian is not obligated to give any specified amount. Rather, under grace the Christian is to give as God has blessed him (II Cor. 9:7). If God has richly blessed then the child of God should give richly. Some Christians give up to 90 per cent. Many give half. By this system God supplies His money to His enterprises . . . through the faithful stewardship of His children.
- Furthermore, the Christian is to give regularly and the New Testament suggests weekly giving on the first day of the week (I Cor. 16:1, 2). He is also exhorted to give cheerfully, not grudgingly nor of necessity, for God is not particularly interested in what a person gives but in the spirit in which it is given. However, there is present value (II Cor. 9:6) and eternal value (Matt. 6:20) in careful stewardship.
- Now, there is nothing wrong with setting up a system and endeavoring to give ten per cent of your income. Many salaried people do this. On the other hand, one should guard against the idea that one-tenth belongs to God and nine-tenths belongs to you. The truth is that all the Christian has belongs to God, and he too belongs to God, and what is infinitely more wonderful, God belongs to you.
- The New Testament standard of giving seems to be that of faithful stewardship rather than that of tithe. The Steward was a member of the ordinary Greek household who received his lord's money at stated intervals and dispensed it faithfully for his lord's obligations, and for his own obligations because he was his lord's servant. He kept strict account of all disbursements and later showed his lord how he had spent the money.
- In much the same manner, the child of God is our Lord's steward, and the money he has in his hand is not, strictly speaking his own, but his Lord's. He must spend the money carefully remembering that at the Judgment Seat of Christ he must give an account of his stewardship (Rom. 14:10-12). To those who have been faithful stewards there will be great rewards (I Cor. 3:14).

## **DID MARY HAVE OTHER CHILDREN BESIDES JESUS?**

- It is our belief that the married life of Mary and Joseph was in every respect normal after the miraculous birth of Jesus. In Matthew 13:55, 56, and in the parallel passage in Mark 6:3 Christ is called the Carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother (half-brother) of James, Joses, Juda and Simon. Here also his sisters (half-sisters) are referred to so there must have been at least two. Here then are at least six children born to Mary by Joseph.
- There are those who teach that all these references to His brethren mean merely near of kin. This might be worthy of consideration except for the fact that His sisters are mentioned too, and for the passage in a confessedly messianic psalm where "brethren" is shown to mean "my mother's children" (Ps. 69:7-9; 21). There seems to be no scriptural authority at all for the belief that Mary had no other children than Jesus.

## **HOW COULD THERE BE LIGHT ON THE FIRST DAY, WHEN THE SUN WAS NOT CREATED UNTIL THE FOURTH DAY?**

- It is our belief that the first magnificent statement of the Bible is an all-comprehensive one, and refers to a complete creation in the dateless past. In other words, God in the beginning, whenever that was no one knows, created the universe including the earth, the stars, the solar system and everything we know anything about.
- In Genesis 1:2 a catastrophe is hinted at for the word "was" is translated by some to read "became" as in Genesis 19:26. Many Bible students believe that here is the place of the sin and judgment of Satan (compare Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:12-19).
- It could be that because of this terrific judgment the earth lay for ages shrouded in dismal, watery darkness. Then God began a work of recreation or reconstruction and in seven solar days brought light and life again to the earth. In doing so, God's first act was to command the sun's light and heat to penetrate the cloud of darkness surrounding the earth. The work of the fourth day was to tilt the earth upon its axis thus bringing into being the seasons. The words used in this account accurately bear out this thought. The word for create (barah) is used only 3 times (1:1; 1:21; 1:26,27).



## **WHY DOES THE APOSTLE'S CREED SAY THAT JESUS DESCENDED INTO HELL?**

- Apparently the Apostle's Creed is a very old document showing in condensed form what the early Christians believed. It is thought to be quite authentic.
- In the creed where it says "He descended into hell" we should understand the New Testament usage of the word. In many of the words translated hell in the King James version a better reading would be hades (Hebrew: sheol). Hades was the place of the departed spirits and according to our Lord's own explanation in Luke 16, had two parts. One was the place of the departed righteous dead, and the other the place of the unrighteous.
- What is meant by "He descended into hell" was that Christ actually died and, as is the case with the dead, His spirit went to the abode of the dead. In the case of Christ, He went to the abode of the righteous dead. Most Bible students believe that at the resurrection of Christ, He took with Him all the inhabitants of the righteous part of hades into the third heaven or paradise (Eph. 4:8-10; II Cor. 12:1-4).

## **IS THE UNITED STATES MENTIONED IN THE PROPHETIC SCRIPTURES?**

- Most Bible students feel that there is no direct mention of the United States in prophecy. However, there are many places where God speaks of the "nations" where the U.S. may be rightfully included.
- For instance "righteousness exalteth a nation but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34) most surely includes our land. Another passage is "the wicked shall be turned into hell and the nations that forget God" (Ps. 9:17) which is a most solemn warning to America. Other passages include such admonitions as "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21) and "render unto all their dues" (Rom. 13:7).
- There are other prophetic passages which possibly include the United States in future happenings. Some feel that the "young lions" of Ezekiel 38:13 refer to the British Commonwealth of nations and include U. S. as a land colonized by Britain. Then without a doubt the world-empire of the Antichrist (Rev. 13:7) will take in our land. On the other side, when Christ returns in power and great glory the righteous ones of the United States and all the nations will be given the privilege of sharing in the millennial kingdom (Zech. 14:9) and in the eternal state to come (Rev. 21:26).

## **WILL THE CHURCH GO THROUGH THE TRIBULATION?**

- The tribulation period as taught in Scripture is synonymous with the 70th week of Daniel (Dan. 9:20-27) and the time of Jacob's trouble. It is a brief (7 years) but intensely dreadful time when under the permissive will of God, Satan is allowed to do his worst and at the same time God pours out His vials of judgment upon a rebellious world. The tribulation period is ushered in by the rapture of the church or the translation of the saints, and culminates with the Battle of Armageddon and the beginning of the Millennium (Rev. 19:11-21).
- The true church consists of every born again child of God from the day of Pentecost to the present, and is synonymous with the Body of Christ. These Christians have known the judgment of God in the person of their Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for their sins on Calvary's cross. Therefore, there can no further judgment fall upon any one who has been truly born again by simple faith in his substitute, Christ.
- The tribulation is primarily a time of judgment and the Christian has no place whatsoever in further judgment for God would be demanding two payments, one at the hands of Christ and one at the hands of the Christian (Rom. 8:1).
- Also, during the tribulation period two tremendous events must take place in heaven where the Christians' presence is demanded. First of all, the Judgment Seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10) where rewards are passed out for faithful service. Secondly, the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9) where the Bride of Christ is united to her heavenly Bridegroom.
- It is also wonderfully true that every last Christian, even carnal Christians, are to be removed from the earth before the tribulation begins. This is because the translation of the church is a part of our salvation and in no wise connected with meritorious living, good works, or service. Note carefully in the great prophetic Book of the New Testament, Revelation, that the church appears prominently until the beginning of Chapter 4, which is the state of the tribulation judgments. Then we do not find the church in this great Book again until we reach the place where it speaks of the heavenly glories. During the time of judgment and terror the church is in glory with Christ her wonderful Head.

## MUST CHRISTIANS HAVE THE GIFT OF TONGUES?

- There is an entire chapter (I Cor. 14) devoted by the Spirit of God to the explanation and regulation of the gift of tongues.

You will remember that the Corinthian church was established by the Apostle Paul who taught it for a while. Following Paul's departure the Corinthian church had no teacher and no Bible. How was the Spirit of God to make known His will and teach these new Christians? God's plan was that certain people in the congregation should speak with other tongues and that simultaneously others in the congregation should recognize the truth and interpret the message for the benefit of all. Here was a divinely inspired fool-proof system of safeguarding truth from error. But because the gift of tongues was a spectacular one, it was enviously desired by many, hence the need for regulation.

- Since the completion of the Bible as the Word of God there is no longer any need of such demonstrations. The Bible is in itself a full and complete revelation of God's plans and purposes. This was anticipated in I Corinthians 13:8-11 where "that which is perfect" is a reference to the completed Word of God, the Bible.

- It is entirely unscriptural to say that the gift of tongues is a mark of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the life of the believer for every believer possesses the Holy Spirit at the instant of conversion (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13; Rom. 8:9). Nor is the so-called gift of tongues a mark of true spirituality for over and over again it is said to be the least of the gifts (I Cor. 14).

- While the Spirit of God admonished the Corinthian church to forbid not to speak in tongues (I Cor. 14:39) yet there are very stringent regulations placed upon such speaking. First of all, no woman was ever allowed to speak in tongues (I Cor. 14:34), then in the assembly there should never be more than two or three to speak and they should speak in order, that is, one by one. If there was no divinely instructed interpreter present they should hold their silence (I Cor. 14:27-30). The principle is clearly enunciated that the ability to speak in tongues is under the control of the one who has the gift. In other words, it is not an explosive gift.

- It is the opinion of many men of God that the gift of tongues has absolutely no place in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ in this day and age, but has fulfilled its purpose and been withdrawn.

## HOW CAN A LOVING GOD CONDEMN THE HEATHEN?

- It is absolutely true that God is a loving God. More than that . . . God is love (I John 4:8). But He is also a just God. And many people have not remembered that these two characteristics (and others) are to be found in the person of God. The difficulty has been in the wrong conception that man possesses of the love of God. God's love is not the weak, spineless, ignoble love we find so evident today. It is in every way consonant with His holiness and righteousness.
- The matter of the fate of those who have not heard of Christ is completely dealt with in the Scriptures (Rom. 1:18-32). Here God solemnly declares that mankind is without excuse (vs. 20). In this exceedingly grave dissertation, God declares that mankind once had the truth (vs. 21) and deliberately turned to idolatry (vs. 23). This was bad enough but the indictment goes on to state that men went on living in sin while all the time they knew God would most certainly judge them (vs. 32). This is one of the most awe-inspiring passages in the Bible.
- As far as we know there is no other way for anyone to be saved but by the precious blood of Christ (John 14:16; Acts 4:12). If God has another way to judge the heathen the Scriptures do not mention it. Some have thought that God will judge the pagan nations on the basis of their acceptance of the light of nature. The Word of God gives little hope for this. The burden of the gospel is that all men, including even those who have never heard, are eternally lost (Rom. 3:10-12), and the only way of salvation is by believing in Christ (John 3:16-18; 3:36).
- Of one thing you may be positive. God will deal with the heathen in perfect justice. There is absolutely no unrighteousness with God (Rom. 9:14; Gen. 18:25). Furthermore it is also true that He is not wishing that any should perish (II Pet. 3:9) and desires that all men should come to repentance.
- We believe it to be true that God today will answer the sincere cry of any heathen heart. If any unbeliever, civilized or uncivilized, seeing the light of God in nature desires to know more perfectly concerning God, we believe that God will send that one light of the glorious gospel of Christ in order that he may believe and be saved. This most solemn fact about the desperate plight of the heathen and the glorious possibility of salvation by the gospel is the heart and soul of all missionary enterprise (Mark 16:15).

## **WHY DID CHRIST SAY "TOUCH ME NOT"?**

- The occasion, of course, is the resurrection morning (John 20:11-18) when Mary Magdalene, in her poignant grief and sudden joy held the feet of the risen Christ tightly. In His tender admonition He did not so much say "touch me not" but rather, do not cling tenaciously to me for the intensive form of the Greek verb is used there. What Mary had to learn and what the disciples had to learn was that there must of necessity be a new relationship between the risen Lord and His blood bought and blood washed ones. From now on they must walk with Him spiritually, not physically. He says, do not cling to me for I am not yet ascended, implying that we may cling to Him to our heart's content after He has ascended, that is, in a spiritual way. In fact, this is pleasing to the heart of Christ that we should lovingly hold on to Him in our prayer life.

- There are some who believe that our Lord ascended into heaven immediately following the resurrection day in order to fulfill the wave sheaf type of Leviticus 23:9-14 and that He was seen by Mary, as it were, on His way to enter the presence of God to present there His blood on our behalf (Heb. 9:11-12).

## **WHO ARE THE 144,000?**

- There is really no basis for confusion concerning the 144,000.

According to Revelation 7:4-8 these are 12,000 sealed servants of God from each of the 12 tribes of Israel endued with power for special evangelizing ministry during the coming Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21). With the removal of the true church at the Rapture (I Thess. 4:13-18) God's witnesses during the tribulation time will be this special company of Jewish preachers who will proclaim the kingdom message, that is, the soon coming of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Christ.

- Apparently their reception will be a bitter one for it is generally believed that the basis of the judgment of the Gentile nations at the close of the tribulation period is determined by the way in which they received these 144,000 (Matt. 25:31-46). Apparently many of the 144,000 will pay for their faithful testimony with their life blood (Rev. 6:9-11) but great rewards will be theirs and God will avenge their mistreatment.

- There is no truth whatever in the claims of various Gentile cults to be the 144,000, nor will the 144,000 be revealed and sealed until the beginning of the tribulation following the rapture of the church.

## **DO THE SCRIPTURES PERMIT DIVORCE?**

- It is the opinion of many teachers of the Bible that the Scriptures permit divorce on one condition only, that of unfaithfulness on the part of either husband or wife. Our Lord, when He was here, said "whosoever shall put away his wife except it be for fornication and shall marry another, committeth adultery" (Matt. 19:9). It is generally held that the innocent party in such a case has the right to remarry. Who is the "innocent party" is often difficult to determine.
- However, there are many angles to every question of divorce and even under circumstances of unfaithfulness both clergymen and educators recommend divorce with the greatest hesitancy. The very best thing to do for one who is in trouble on such a question is to go to some man of God in the community and sit down before an open Bible and prayerfully, earnestly and unreservedly seek to know the will of God and to do it. No categorical answer can be given which will cover all cases.

## **SHOULD THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVE SATURDAY OR SUNDAY?**

- It should be clearly stated that the seventh day Sabbath is, and always has been a strictly Jewish institution. It was given as a sign to Israel (Exod. 31:12-18) when they arrived at Mt. Sinai on their way to the Promised Land. It was never imposed upon any Gentile nations and for a period of 2,500 years of human history there is absolutely no mention of it.
- Furthermore, the character of the Jewish Sabbath was one of complete cessation of activity and rest. It was not a day of worship nor communion nor fellowship, nor of religious service. The Christian is no more under obligation to keep the seventh day Sabbath than he is to journey to Jerusalem three times each year. The Sabbath was an integral part of a legal system which was completely done away with at the death of Christ (Rom. 10:4). To bring the Jewish Sabbath over into the dispensation of grace is to create the greatest confusion. (Read the Book of Galatians thoroughly.)
- On the other hand, the Lord's Day fits perfectly into all the principles of the age of grace. It is in commemoration of our Lord's rising from the dead on the first day of the week. It is a day of glad communion and worship. It is a day of Christian activity and purposeful service for Him.
- Yet there is no command to observe it for this would be contrary to the grace principles. The second, third and all the days of the week are just as much our Lord's time as the first day of the week.



## WHAT IS THE MEANING OF "BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD"?

- In I Corinthians 15:29 we read "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" This is the one passage in the Bible where this baptism is mentioned. And we are absolutely sure that the Scriptures in no wise teach that any living person can be vicariously baptized in water for anyone who has previously died. There is not a breath of scripture to substantiate such a belief.
- What, then, is the meaning? There are three possible interpretations. First, the context shows that Paul is proving the reality of the believer's resurrection. Over and over again he points out proof of the certainty of our resurrection belief. As further proof he cites in verse 29 the heathen belief in resurrection in that they baptized for the dead. If there was no second life, why then did even the heathen perform this rite.
- A second possible explanation is advanced by Dr. C. I. Scofield who points out the baptism for the dead is merely a rite of water baptism as new Christians stepped into the ranks of the army of Christ to take the place of those Christians who had served and had died. It is thought of soldiers volunteering for army services to fill the ranks of decimated regiments.
- A third meaning emphasizes the real meaning of baptism which is a ceremony of death. When we are baptized in water we acknowledge that when Christ died, we died with Him. When He hung on the cross we hung there with Him. Baptism is a ceremony of introduction into death. But if there is no resurrection from the dead, why then be baptized? Why be a Christian at all? If this life is all, why then not do as the heathen do, eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we shall be no more.
- The very solemn fact of the irrevocability of our decisions in this life is clearly taught in Scripture. There is no second chance on the road to hell. God in no wise offers to open the gates of perdition. Now is the time to be saved. Today is the day of salvation. After death has taken place eternal destiny is sealed.
- It is a tragic thing that certain religious systems have seized upon this verse (I Cor. 15:29), have wrested it out of its true meaning, and have used it to prey upon the sorrowful concern of men and women for their loved ones who have died unsaved.

## WHAT IS THE UNPARDONABLE SIN?

- The term "unpardonable sin" is not a Biblical phrase and many Bible students feel that there is no such thing as a sin which cannot be forgiven today. Christ died for all our sins, and in His death God is perfectly free to fully forgive all manner of sin.
- The saying, however, arose from an incident in the life of our Lord (Matt. 12) where after Christ had performed many miracles and had healed one notable demon-possessed and blind-deaf one, the Pharisees, filled with hateful envy, charged that He had cast out demons by the power of Satan.
- In answer to them Christ charged that all manner of sin should be forgiven the sons of men, but when one blasphemed the Holy Spirit (in whose power Christ wrought His miracle) as the Pharisees had just done, there was no forgiveness in this life nor in the life to come.
- Apparently for any sin to be unpardonable it must partake of all the elements of this scene. There should be clear evidence of His deity shown in the performance of hitherto unheard-of miracles. Then in spite of this evidence, Christ is charged with working His miraculous works through the power of the evil one. No doubt this even today would be unpardonable.
- Many are troubled by the grossness of the sins they have committed. Grievous sins weigh down the heart terrifically. And some have mistaken the burden of theft, fornication and murder as a sign that these sins could not be forgiven. However, all of these are shown to be pardonable on the pages of Scripture (Luke 23:43; John 8:11; II Sam. 12:13).
- It should be also pointed out that there is certainly an "unpardonable attitude" which cannot be forgiven the sons of men. Men and women are not condemned to hell today because of their sins, but because they refuse to accept the pardon that God has offered (John 3:18). If one persists in the attitude of refusing to believe on Christ, then there is no other way for him to be saved. This attitude is unpardonable.
- The unpardonable sin should not be confused with the "sin unto death" (I John 5:16,17) which is a sin which Christians commit, and which may result in their being taken home to heaven. There were instances of this sin (I Cor. 11:30-32).

## **IS THE LORD'S PRAYER FOR US TODAY?**

- It seems undeniable that the Lord's prayer (Matt. 6:9-15), or, more properly the disciples prayer, is a prayer upon kingdom ground rather than upon church ground. It is not prayed in the name of Christ (John 16:23-24) and it makes human forgiveness the ground for the expectation of divine forgiveness (contrast Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13). However, most people fail to understand the real purpose of the prayer. Never was it intended to be a mere rote prayer.
- Our Lord did not plan that people should memorize the prayer and recite it. It is rather a model prayer with all the beautiful elements of true petition and supplication. There is, first of all, worship, and adoration to God for His worthiness, a recognition of God's will throughout all of time. Then comes the place of petition. This prayer has all the required elements of true prayer as you would naturally expect our Lord to give.
- It is very wrong for Christians of today to ignore the prayer on the ground that it has its primary use in the millennium period. Rather, while not parrot-like reciting the prayer, we should love it and model our own prayers after its incomparable characteristics.

## **WHAT IS THE PROPER MODE OF WATER BAPTISM?**

- We believe that it is a good plan for every man to be fully persuaded in his own mind. While it is certainly true that the sprinkling of water seems to beautifully illustrate the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the believer, immersion seems to better portray the Christian's identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. This great truth needs to be constantly emphasized that the Christian died to sin and rose again in the Person of his substitute.
- While water baptism is in no way essential to salvation, it most certainly is exemplified in the lives of the New Testament believers (Acts 2:41; 8:36; 10:47; 18:8) and becomes a mark of first obedience for one who is truly born again, and it portrays graphically our oneness with Christ in His death and resurrection. There are many godly Christian leaders who are fully persuaded in their own minds that sprinkling is the correct form, and while we strongly deprecate any dividing of the body of Christ over this point, it is our sincere belief that immersion is the mode taught in Scripture. There is much controversy over this point. The only answer seems to be a personal study of the Scripture involved and a personal conviction of that study.

## **DOES THE BIBLE TEACH DIVINE HEALING?**

- If by divine healing you mean God's ability to heal, the answer is a most decided "yes." God is abundantly able to heal and has demonstrated His ability times without number through the centuries.
- If, however, you mean does God always heal in answer to prayer, the answer is "no." Many times God, acting in sovereign wisdom, has refused to heal for reasons which are best known to Himself. Sometimes sickness is a blessing, sometimes it is a teacher, oftentimes it is a means of growth in grace.
- There are many factors entering into the matter of healing. First, it is not true that personal faith is an absolute requisite for healing, nor is it true that all sickness is the direct result of sin. While healing of the body is most certainly included in the atonement of Christ, this perfect healing awaits the time of our entrance into the gloryland. On the other hand, God could send sickness as a punishment, and there are cases where sickness resulted from a failure on the part of the Christian to judge sin in his own life (I Cor. 11:30-32; I John 5:16).
- The matter of healing is an involved one. Briefly one could say that God is always able to heal but sometimes it is not His will. If one is sick he should prayerfully examine his own inner life (I John 1:9) to be sure there is no lurking sin and then after asking earnestly for healing, commit the result to God's loving omniscience. As this is an involved question and space is limited here it is earnestly suggested that those interested turn to God's Word for a prayerful study on this point.

## **WERE THE DAYS OF CREATION SOLAR DAYS OR LONG PERIODS OF YEARS?**

- On this question Bible students are sharply divided. There are some who feel that Genesis 1:1 just merely states a fact, with the rest of the chapter going on to amplify that statement. So that the seven days of Genesis might correspond to the seven great geological periods of which our scientists have spoken.
- On the other hand, there is another opinion that Genesis 1:1 speaks of the original creation and between the first and second verses there is a hidden tragedy explained by the fall and judgment of Satan (Ezek. 28:11-19; Isa. 14:12-17), at which time the earth was also judged and lay in a state of inactivity (ice ages) for an unknown period, possibly a very long time. Then in Genesis 1:3 God began a program of reconstructing the earth to make it a place of habitation for man. It seems to us that surface facts favor the solar day theory.

## **SHOULD A CHRISTIAN SEEK THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?**

- The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a sovereign act of God by which the one who has trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour is forever united (divinely fused, welded) to the body of Christ. It is not to be sought for nor tried for. Every believer is immediately baptized into the body of Christ at the instant of conversion. It is unscriptural for any to "seek" the baptism of the Spirit of God for this ministry of the Spirit is a free gift from the heavenly Father to every one of His children (I Cor. 12:13; John 14:16-17; 16:7-15; I Cor. 6:19-20; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13; Rom. 8:9; I John 2:27; Acts 5:32).
- On the other hand, the filling of the Spirit is something else entirely (Eph. 5:18). It is a separate ministry by the Spirit to certain Christians who earnestly desire it and who are clean and empty. The filling of the Spirit may be repeated as often as there is need and as the divine requirements are met, namely; that the Christian be separated unto Christ and earnestly seeking to do God's will (Acts 2:4; 4:8; 4:31).

## **WERE THE AGES OF THE PATRIARCHS COUNTED IN ACTUAL YEARS?**

- As far as we know, the ages of men before the flood were in solar years of the same length as our present years. There is nothing to indicate that these years were lunar years or 30 days in length as some have suggested. As a matter of fact, the absurdity is seen in the genealogical table of Genesis 5, where certain men would have become fathers at the age of five years (vs. 21) if the lunar year idea were true.
- It is to be remembered that God was anxious at that time for the propagation of large families to inhabit the earth, and without a doubt, God extended the years of men's lives in order to expedite the process. Medical scientists tell us today that men's bodies recreate themselves every seven years so that in the course of an ordinary lifetime men's bodies would be made over ten times. Surely the same God who could bring this to pass could also lengthen men's lives to any desired span that He chose.
- Some have suggested that there was no rainfall before the flood (Gen. 2:6) and this might have made the difference in the length of life. Others point out that in the coming millennium the length of life's span will again be increased to former, pre-flood limits when a person one hundred years old will be considered a child (Isa. 65:20) and no doubt many will live through the entire thousand-year period.

## **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A HEBREW, ISRAELITE, AND JEW?**

- Although these are closely related there is a difference in origin. The root meaning of the word, "Hebrew" seems to be that of someone who crosses over. This was applied to Abraham and his descendants because he left his home at Ur of the Chaldees to go over to the Promised Land (Gen. 12:1-3). So the children of Abraham could properly be called Hebrews.
- The term Israelite, of course, comes from the new name which God gave to Jacob, and which means "A Prince with God" (Gen. 32:28). So the twelve sons of Jacob and their descendants are rightly called Israelites, or sons of Israel. These were all heads of tribes. This term is slightly more narrow, though for our purpose it would be synonymous with the word "Hebrew."
- The term Jew, technically speaking, belongs only to one of the twelve tribes, the Tribe of Judah, but New Testament usage makes the term "Jew" synonymous with both of the preceding terms (Acts 2:14; 2:22). Christ was born of the Tribe of Judah and so He is properly a Jew. I do not believe there is any distinction between the popular usage of any of these terms today. All three refer to the descendants of Jacob.

## **DO YOU THINK THAT JUDAS ISCARIOT WILL BE THE ANTICHRIST?**

- There is no doubt that Judas Iscariot committed the most heinous crime in all of history (Mark 14:21). Also, we fully believe that the Antichrist is to be the most blatant blasphemer and arch-deceiver of the ages. But we do not believe these two to be the same.
- The belief that Judas will be the Antichrist arises mainly from the similarity of terms used. In John 17:12 Judas is called the "Son of Perdition," and in II Thessalonians 2:3 the same term is applied to the coming Antichrist. But the coincidence of these terms is too weak to prove the point of identity.
- Then there is much to argue against this theory. In the first place Judas is said to have gone to his own place, the place of torment, hades. In order to resurrect Judas for his part as the Antichrist it would be necessary for Satan to hold the keys of hades. This is not so, for Christ holds the keys (Rev. 1:18). We do not believe that Satan can ever open the gates of hades.



## **WHAT IS THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH?**

- To any one who earnestly desires to be subject to the Word of God there is some very plain and definite instructions regarding the place of women in the church assembly (I Cor. 14; I Tim. 2). God's will seems to be that when the church is gathered together in a scriptural way, then the place of the woman is one of silence as far as her ministry is concerned. She recognizes the headship of the man (I Cor. 11:2) through whom Christ speaks to His church and if she be called upon to assume a place of prominence or temporary leadership she outwardly acknowledges her inward understanding of God's place for women by wearing a veil over her head or some other mark of distinction (I Cor. 11:1-16).
- There is no slight here upon the woman. It is simply the recognition of her proper place in nature. It is true that in the new creation there is neither Jew nor Gentile, male nor female, but all are one in Christ Jesus but this does not alter our standing as men and women living in the world. God's instructions and prohibitions, as laid down in the New Testament, are continuously operative as long as the church exists (I Tim. 2:7).
- On the other hand, the godly Christian woman has many other spheres of service. The scriptural prohibitions apply only to the church assembly. There are many avenues of service in which women may wonderfully qualify, in teaching other women and children, calling, ministering to the sick, personal work, prayer, works of charity, etc.

## **DOES THE BIBLE FORBID CREMATION?**

- I do not know any passage in Scripture that forbids the cremation of dead bodies. On the other hand, there seems to be little or no scriptural sanction for cremation. In Genesis 3:19 God says, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." In all cases of death in the Bible the burial seems to be that of placing in the grave. On the other hand, the pagan nations round about the children of God used cremation quite generally and God a number of times in a general way forbid His people to adopt any of the customs of the heathen nations (Deut. 7:1-11; 12:1-3).
- In cases of emergency or where there was a great epidemic there might be need for cremation in order to safeguard the health of the community. In other cases it would seem best that the body of our loved ones should be returned to the earth.

## **DO OUR LOVED ONES IN HEAVEN KNOW WHAT WE ARE DOING ON EARTH?**

- Concerning this matter as to whether or not a child of God who has passed into the presence of Christ understands what is going on here on earth, the Word of God does not specifically state. My own conviction is that God veils the eyes of those who are with Him so that they cannot know what transpires on earth. On the other hand, it should be remembered that when one arrives in the presence of Christ everything takes on a different significance. Those things which caused us concern on earth no longer worry us in heaven. When one is with Christ he sees everything from the vantage point of the view of Christ. He more fully understands the plan and purpose of God. He sees clearly the end from the beginning (I Cor. 13:12, 13).
- We should remember, too, that those who dwell in heaven are no longer bound by clocks, calendars or schedules. Heavenly time is on the basis of a great eternal now, so in this sense our loved ones would not have to wait as we must wait for the completion and consummation of things. The one in heaven sees everything in its full sense. In God's presence is fullness of joy and at His right hand are pleasures forever more (Ps. 16:11). There shall nothing be allowed to enter heaven which would take away from the quintessence of glory which awaits the child of God.

### **PLEASE EXPLAIN HEBREWS 6:4-6.**

- The understanding of this passage demands a thorough knowledge of the theme of this Book of Hebrews. It was written to early Hebrew Christians who, under the stress of persecution, were wondering if they had been right in following the Lord Jesus Christ or whether it would not be the part of wisdom to go back to the religion of their fathers including all that the law, ordinances and the temple stood for. In other words, they who were on this side of the cross were casting their eyes back to the days before Christ had died.
- The just argument of the Book of Hebrews is that all the Old Testament ordinances and institutions were merely temporal, and had value only as they looked forward to their fulfillment in the person and work of Christ. As a matter of fact, Christ was better than anything the Old Testament had to suggest. So the writer of the Book of Hebrews (6:4) urges that these Christians go on to perfection (6:1) and (6:4-6) shows the utter impossibility of going back to the time before the cross, for then they must crucify the Son of God again and put Him to open shame. Technically speaking, this retrogression would be an impossibility.

## **SHOULD A CHRISTIAN VOTE?**

- It is wonderfully true that the citizenship of a Christian is in heaven (Phil. 3:20) but it is also true that the Christian has a very definite responsibility to "render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (Matt. 22:21). It is never the will of our Heavenly Father that we should withdraw from the world (I Cor. 5:9, 10) but that we should constantly show ourselves exemplary citizens and a pattern of righteousness (Titus 2:7).
- Consequently, we believe the Christian should vote and vote as he is lead of the Lord. While it is certainly true that we do not expect the world to become better but rather worse (II Tim. 3:1-7) still we are always to be aligned on the side of right (I Pet. 2:12-15). In this we have the example of our Lord who was in every respect a perfect citizen and the Apostle Paul who obeyed every ordinance of man as unto God (Rom. 13:1-7).

## **CAN WE BE HAPPY IN HEAVEN WITH LOVED ONES IN HELL?**

- There is no doubt whatsoever about the happiness of the Christian in heaven. First of all, there will be a complete absence of the things that make for unhappiness: no more sin, no more sorrow, no more pain, no more tears, no more death, for the former things are passed away (Rev. 21:3-8). Then in heaven there will be the addition of things that make for joy: the presence of God, the presence of loved ones, the mansions in the skies, the glory and honor and blessing that God had planned (Rev. 22:1-7; John 14:1-6; I Thess. 4:13-18). It is very definitely stated that God will wipe away all tears (Rev. 21:4) and that there shall in no wise enter in anything that defileth (Rev. 21:27).
- Now, just how the memory of loved ones who are not in heaven will be dealt with we are not told. This is one of God's secrets. But God will most surely work it out, for in His presence is fullness of joy, and at His right hand are pleasures forevermore (Ps. 16:11). One thing is sure. We shall not view things anymore from a mere earthly, limited viewpoint (I Cor. 13:12). Rather, we shall look at everything through the incomparable vantagepoint of God's eyes.
- Yet we should not take rest now in this coming fact. For there is yet time to reach our loved ones for Christ. While there is life God is still calling (II Cor. 6:2; II Pet. 3:9). By prayer and by testimony God may give you to see the salvation of your loved ones.

## **CAN A CHRISTIAN BE A LODGE MEMBER?**

- The answer is "yes." In order to be saved, one must truly trust the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. Many lodge members have done this. But the question is far deeper than that. It's can a lodge member be a real Christian, an efficient Christian, God's kind of a Christian?
- Christ should never be asked to take second place in any believer's life. He assuredly deserves first place, and it is neither honest nor spiritually profitable to offer Him any other. This means pre-eminence in all phases of life. This is the test of the lodge.
- If one can boldly testify of the pre-eminence of Christ in lodge membership . . . if the Lord is welcome at lodge meetings . . . if your appetite for the Scripture, your time for prayer, and your opportunities for witnessing are not all lessened by association at the lodge, then there is assuredly nothing wrong. On the other hand, the lodge might furnish a fruitful place to win others for Christ.
- But if the lodge becomes the "unequal yoke" (I Cor. 6:14-18), or if while God is ostensibly honored, Christ is ignored, or if your church life suffers, or if other Christians "stumble" (I Cor. 8) over your membership . . . then lodge membership is wrong, definitely wrong and your Christian life will suffer if you maintain it (I Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17).

## **WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A BISHOP, ELDER AND DEACON?**

- These are names of officers in the New Testament Church. While the term "pastor" (Greek: poimain) which means shepherd apparently came a bit later, it seemed to grow out of the office of teaching Elder (I Tim. 5:17). The gift of pastoral ability is one of the gifts of the risen Christ (Eph. 4:11).
- In the church also were Bishops (Elders) and Deacons (Phil. 1:1). The root meaning of the term Bishop (Greek: episcopas) is overseer. Evidently Bishop and Elder (Greek: presbuteros) were the same office (Titus 1:5,7) with the term Elder meaning a more mature person. The leadership in the local church was always plural, there is no instance of a single Elder.
- The Deacon (Greek: deaconas) meaning "servant" seems to have risen from the need presented in Acts 6:1-7. Further instructions about the selection of deacons are given in I Timothy 3:8-13. The first officers were selected personally by the Apostles. Since that time they have been selected according to divinely given qualifications.

## **ARE THE TERMS "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" AND "KINGDOM OF GOD" THE SAME?**

- In a certain sense, yes, they are. We believe the term "kingdom of heaven" has to do with God's rule at any time over this world. Literally it is, "kingdom of the heaven," i.e., over this earth. This term would naturally include any exercise of God's authority during any age.
- The "kingdom of God," on the other hand, seems to mean a larger sphere and includes God's authority over not only the earth but the heavens as well, including men, angels and the powers of darkness. Quite naturally there would be some sphere of operation where these terms would be synonymous. Then there are some places where the kingdom of God would be operative which would not include the kingdom of heaven. Dr. C. I. Scofield's note in the Scofield Bible is helpful here.

## **HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT BAPTIZE WITH FIRE?**

- Upon referring to Matthew 3:11, John the Baptist speaks of our Lord's coming and describes Him as the one who will baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. We believe that John the Baptist is speaking first of all of the coming of Christ into the world to prepare the way of salvation. Christ Himself while here spoke of the coming outpouring of the Holy Spirit which occurred on the day of Pentecost. At that time the Holy Spirit baptized or united all believers into one body. From that time to this, every last believer at the instant of salvation has been baptized or united to this same body (1 Cor. 12:13).
- The matter of the baptism of fire is explained in verse 12 where fire becomes a symbol of the coming time of judgment at the end of the age. Then Christ will be gathering His wheat into the barn but the chaff, in this case a symbol of unbelievers, will be burned with unquenchable fire. The fire in this case is not the believer's zeal but the judgment of God upon unbelievers.

## **WHAT DOES THE WORD "SELAH" MEAN?**

- Most Bible students feel that this term was intended to mark off a musical pause as many of the Psalms were written to be sung. If this is the case then the word is not to be spoken in reading but merely passed over. The word occurs 74 times and is found only in the Books of Psalms and Habakkuk.

## **HOW COULD ALL THE ANIMALS GET INTO THE ARK?**

- The dimensions of the ark (Gen. 6:15) were 300 cubits long by 50 cubits wide by 30 cubits high. The cubit is generally thought to be the distance between the elbow and the longest finger, and could have been a length of from 18 to 22 inches. With this being true, the ark could have been a very large craft and being built square, for its purpose was only to float, it is estimated it could have held the contents of 1000 loaded freight cars of today. There were of course three stories or decks.
- Again, the animals that were to be included were limited to a male and female of each kind with extra ones for sacrifice (Gen. 6:19; 7:2). And while there is an unbelievably large number of varieties of animals, the actual families of animals are not too many. For instance—only 2 dogs would be required. Those who have studied the question report that there seems to be no difficulty in accommodating all the animals, as well as sufficient food to feed them. The fish could, of course, stay in the waters.
- But we miss the point if we do not see beyond the size of the ark and the number of animals to the greater question. Did God know what He was doing? Is the God who in the beginning created the animals, able to give the proper specifications for building a craft to preserve alive the land animals through a flood of waters? If your God is sufficient in wisdom to do this, then there is no problem at all.

## **DO YOU BELIEVE THE COMING OF CHRIST IS NEAR?**

- We surely do. While no man knows the day nor the hour (Matt. 24:36) we can know the season. On one occasion our Lord censured the religious leaders of His day for being unaware of His first coming (Matt. 16: 1-3). The next great event for which the Church is looking is the rapture or the translation of the Church (I Thess. 4:13-18; I Cor. 15:51-53). There is nothing in Scripture to prevent this thrilling event from happening at any time. No scripture needs to be fulfilled before this coming can take place.
- Furthermore, there are many signs of His near approach, the greatest of which is the return of the Jewish nation to their own land. This event is inseparably tied up with the chain of events surrounding the whole prophetic future. This return is one of which almost every Old Testament prophet has written. Other signs include the apostasy of the church; the coming of the atomic age, the increase in war's intensity; the advance in learning, and the increase in travel.

## **EXPLAIN "HE THAT ENDURES TO THE END WILL BE SAVED."**

- This reference is to Matthew 24:13 which is part of the Olivet Discourse, one of the three of the recorded longer discourses of the Lord. This great prophetic message is one given in answer to the disciples' threefold question in Matthew 24:3. Most of the material of this discourse is still future and has to do with the events surrounding the coming Great Tribulation (vs. 21). The setting is distinctly Jewish and the exhortation "He that shall endure until the end, the same shall be saved" is a challenge to the Jews for courage and steadfastness during this time of Jacob's trouble.
- To use this verse as a text for Christians today would be to ruthlessly tear it from its context. The truth for Christians is, he that is saved will endure unto the end, not through his own power, wisdom or courage but because of the fact that he is safe in the strong hands of Christ (John 10:28-30).
- The "end" mentioned in this verse is the end of the Tribulation Period and the "salvation" referred to here is more properly, deliverance by the intervention of the Lord Jesus Christ as King of Kings at the Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-16).

## **IS THE STORY OF JONAH TO BE UNDERSTOOD LITERALLY?**

- There is not the slightest doubt but that the Scriptures set forth the entire story of Jonah in literal fashion. There is no indication that we are to accept it in a mythical way or as an allegory. It is presented in sober, definite terms and, of course, tied in to definite times and places.
- The question is not so much as to whether there is a whale (Hebrew: "great fish") large enough to swallow and accommodate God's disobedient prophet, but whether we have a God wise enough and powerful enough to prepare such a fish (Jonah 1:17).
- We are not the least surprised when we read of our government preparing a fish large enough to swallow 100 men and retain them for months on end and then to disgorge them without the slightest harm. Such a fish we call a submarine, but the principle is the same.
- Many have stumbled over the fact that certain species of whales have very small throats. This is true, but other species have ample throats and, of course, the Hebrew itself does not say whale but rather "great fish." The question resolves itself down to our conception of God.



## HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

- There is no question but that this is the most stupendous undertaking in all of God's universe. The salvation of sinners is never on the basis of God's merely passing over or closing His eyes to sin. God saves sinners on a completely righteous basis consonant with the divine holiness of His character. The creation of this vast unmeasured universe is far less an undertaking than the working out of God's plan to save sinners.

- On the other hand, the acceptance of God's salvation by the sinner is the most simple thing in all of life. One need not be rich, nor wise nor educated. Age is no barrier nor the color of one's skin. The reception of the enormous benefits of God's redemption is based upon the simplest of terms so that there is no one in all this wide universe who need be turned away.

- How does one become a Christian? There is but one simple step divided into three parts. First of all one takes his rightful place as a sinner (Rom. 3:23; 6:23; Ezek. 18:4; John 5:24). Next one looks to Christ as the only Saviour (I Cor. 15:3; I Pet. 2:24; Isa. 53:6; John 3:16). And thirdly, one, by the exercise of his will personally receives Christ, opens the door of his heart to God's Son, believes that Christ is what He claims to be in an individual, personal, living way (John 1:12; John 3:36; Acts 16:31; Acts 4:12).

- The results of this are unbelievably wonderful. Our sins are taken away (John 1:29), we possess eternal life now (I John 5:11, 12), we become a new creature in Christ (II Cor. 5:17), the Holy Spirit takes up His residence in our hearts (I Cor. 6:19) and we will never perish (John 10:28-30).

- This truthfully is life's greatest transaction. This is the goal of all living; this is the ultimate of our existence. From the bottom of our hearts we invite and exhort any reader who knows not Christ to follow these simple instructions and be born again eternally into God's family (Matt. 11:28; John 1:12; Acts 4:12; Acts 16:31).

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